

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Please amend claims 12, 16, and 29-36.

1. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment having a GE Brightness of at least about 90.0 and a steepness ($d_{30}/d_{70} \times 100$) of at least about 39.

2. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 1, wherein said GE Brightness is at least about 91.0.

3. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 2, wherein said GE Brightness is at least about 92.0.

4. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 3, wherein said GE Brightness is at least about 93.5.

5. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 4, wherein said GE Brightness is at least about 94.0.

6. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 1, wherein said steepness ranges from about 39 to about 45.

7. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 6, wherein said steepness ranges from about 41 to about 45.

8. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 1, having a particle size distribution such that about 80% to about 94% by weight are less than 2 μm .

9. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 8, wherein said particle size distribution is such that about 85% to about 92% by weight are less than 2 μm .

10. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 9, wherein said particle size distribution is such that about 85% to about 90% by weight are less than 2 μm .

11. (Canceled).

12. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 1, having a GE Brightness of at least about 92.0, and a titania concentration of less than or equal to about 0.35%.

13. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 12, wherein said titania concentration is less than or equal to about 0.30%.

14. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 13, wherein said titania concentration is less than or equal to about 0.20%.

15. (Previously Presented) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 12, wherein said GE Brightness is at least about 93.0, and said titania concentration is less than or equal to about 0.15%.

16. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 1, having a GE Brightness of at least about 94.5 and 91.5, having a titania concentration less than or equal to about 0.40% by weight of the pigment on a dry basis, and having a particle size distribution such that about 80% to 94% by weight are less than 2 μm .

17. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 16, having a particle size distribution such that about 2% to about 15% by weight are less than 0.25 μm .
18. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 16, wherein said particle size distribution is such that about 85% to about 92% by weight are less than 2 μm .
19. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 18, wherein said particle size distribution is such that about 2% to about 10% by weight are less than 0.25 μm .
20. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 18, wherein said particle size distribution is such that about 85% to about 90% by weight are less than 2 μm .
21. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 18, wherein said particle size distribution is such that about 2% to about 8% is less than 0.25 μm .
22. (Previously Presented) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 16, having a GE Brightness of at least about 92.0.
23. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 22, having a GE Brightness of at least about 93.0.
24. (Original) A paper coating or filler composition comprising a hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 1 and a coating base.
25. (Original) A paper coating or filler composition comprising a hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 7 and a coating base.

26. (Previously Presented) A paper coating or filler composition comprising a hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 12 and a coating base.

27. (Original) A paper coating or filler composition comprising a hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 22 and a coating base.

28. (Original) A hydrous kaolin pigment produced by a process comprising:
(a) forming an aqueous suspension of a hydrous kaolin clay; (b) forming a primary product by subjecting the suspension to classification or a combination of classification and grinding; (c) separating the kaolin from impurities by selective flocculation; and (d) defining the separated kaolin, wherein the product of the process is a hydrous kaolin pigment having a GE Brightness of at least about 90.0 and a steepness ($d_{30}/d_{70} \times 100$) of at least about 39.

29. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 28, produced by a process comprising: (a) forming an aqueous suspension of a hydrous kaolin clay; (b) forming a primary product by subjecting the suspension to classification or a combination of classification and grinding; (c) separating the kaolin from impurities by selective flocculation; and (d) defining the separated kaolin, wherein the product of the process is a hydrous kaolin pigment having a GE Brightness of at least about 91.5 and a titania concentration of less than or equal to about 0.40% by weight of the pigment on a dry basis.

30. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 28, produced by a process comprising: (a) forming an aqueous suspension of a hydrous kaolin clay; (b) forming a primary product by subjecting the suspension to classification

or a combination of classification and grinding; (c) separating the kaolin from impurities by selective flocculation; and (d) defining the separated kaolin, wherein the product of the process is a hydrous kaolin pigment having a GE Brightness of at least about 93.5.

31. (Currently Amended) ~~The product of the process of any one of claims 28, 29, or 30~~ hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 28, wherein said separating step includes the steps of flocculating the kaolin away from dispersed impurities and redispersing the flocculated kaolin.

32. (Currently Amended) ~~The product of the process~~ hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 31, wherein said redispersion involves reaction with an oxidant, mechanical shear, or both.

33. (Currently Amended) ~~The product of the process of any one of claims 28, 29, or 30~~ hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 28, wherein said primary product is subjected to at least one additional beneficiation procedure prior to selective flocculation.

34. (Currently Amended) ~~The product of the process~~ hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 33, wherein said at least one additional beneficiation procedure is degritting, magnetic separation, flotation, classification, grinding, reductive bleaching, or a combination thereof.

35. (Currently Amended) ~~The product of the process~~ hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 32, wherein said oxidant is selected from hydrogen peroxide or ozone.

36. (Currently Amended) ~~The product of the process~~ hydrous kaolin pigment of claim 35, wherein said oxidant is ozone.

37. (Previously Presented) A cellulose based substrate coated or filled with a composition comprising a pigment according to any one of claims 1, 12, or 16.

38. (Original) A coated or filled cellulose based substrate according to claim 37, wherein said substrate is paper.

39. (Original) A coated or filled cellulose based substrate according to claim 38, wherein said paper is light weight coating basepaper.